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WEEKLY VISITANT.

FOR DECEMBER 27.

[ANTICIPATED.]

"OURS ARE THE PLANS OF FAIR DELIGHTFUL PEACE,
"UNWARP'D BY PARTY RAGE, TO LIVE LIKE BROTHERS."

SALEM, DECEMCER 20, 1806.

TO OUR PATRONS.

We have already apprised our readers that the interest of the VISITANT *would soon be trasferred to a publication under the title of* THE FRIEND, *which will commence on the 3d of January next; and doubtless most of our readers have seen the Prospectus of that intended publication.* THE FRIEND *will therefore be sent to the Subscribers for the* VISITANT, *unless they leave orders to the contrary before its appearance. To give time to make some necessary previous arrangements, we are induced to anticipate the regular time for publishing this number—which completes the volume.*

In looking back upon the labours of the year, we do not find so much originality as we fondly hoped, at its commencement, to present. But we are proud to have given publicity to the writings of Barca, *of* Hirax, *of* Alexis, *of* A Visionary, *and of some others, whom we shall not particularize....While we invite them to renew and continue their correspondence, we tender them our cordial thanks for past favours.*

In our Selections, we have always endeavored to lay before our readers such pieces as might instruct as well as amuse. Morality has been our polar star....If our pages have beguiled the child of woe of a single tear, if they have enlightened one mind, or made one heart better, our labours have not been in vain.

The Title-Page and Index will be presented on the 1st of January.

MISCELLANY.

The following, taken from a Weekly Miscellany, published in Calcutta, by John Lathrop, jr. esq. though written at the commencement of the year, we presume will not be unacceptable to our readers at its close.

TIME!

How speedily will the consummation of all things commence! How soon will the commisioned Arch-angel lift his hand to heaven, and swear by the Almighty name, "that Time shall be no longer."

Then, abused opportunities, never can return ; and new opportunities, will never again be offered—The seal will be fixed—our future fate determined, and the secrets of the other world be developed to our eyes—to fill us with joys divine or torments ineffable. Such are the considerations which will employ the reflecting mind, when the birth of a new year, reminds frail mortality of its shortened duration. "I have another year the less to live."—How have I improved or mis-spent the years that are past !—Alas !

"We take no note of time,
"But from its loss. To give it then a tongue,
"Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,
"I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,
"It is the knell of my departed hours ;
"Where are they ? With the years beyond the flood !"

Come then, and let us reason together, and devote a few moments to serious reflection. This festive season should be dedicated to solemn retrospection ; the revels of thoughtless mirth are inconsistent with its proper celebration. We ought to review the past, and if we find that in our journey thus far, we have met with more thorns than flowers, let us be duly thankful to the guardian Providence, who has given us many causes for rejoicing, and who never afflicts us but for our good. Man surveys the creation around him with a partial and ill judging eye—He fain would wander cheerily along through a "wilderness of sweets," and, whenever the pleasantness of his course is affected or impeded, by untoward events or unexpected obstacles, he accuses Providence of unkindness, and cries out in agony, "was ever sorrow equal to my sorrow !"—How vain and idle are his complaints and exclamations ! In the vegetable world, behold the herbalist seeking for plants of medicinal virtue. The blooming rose, in vain breathes her fragrance and woos his senses.—But see, with what delight he has found and secured a humble root, bitter to the taste and disgusting to the sight. This bitter shall produce the best sweets of life—it shall strengthen and invigorate the diseased frame—restore lustre to the languid eyes and flush the pale cheek with the luxuriant glow of health. The gairish children of the spring, that adorn the garden, and decorate the field, are short lived and frail ;—they flourish to-day, and to-morrow are worthless and withered. So in our progress through life we find our pleasures are vain and transient—they are scarcely tasted ere they are gone and the remembrance of departed joys, is ever a source of mortifying and unavailing regret.—But the bitters—the pains of life may always be converted into lasting and substancial benefits—they are the medicines which can cure all our moral disorders and infirmities —they communicate their healing virtues to the distempered soul, and afford vigor and sanity to the whole intellectual system.—He, who can enumerate more sufferings than enjoyments, in describing the vicissitudes which he has experienced in the course of his existence, has, if he duly reflects on his circumstances, more reason to be thankful, than to repine ; and this, he may assume as a criterion of the justness of his reasoning—that, if he do repine, his conclusions

against the goodness of Providence, are erroneous—if he do not, he may be sure that his afflictions have had their intended salutary effects.

The poets of the east who are not in general, over-burthened with religious sentiment or morality, give us a lively picture of the value that we ought to put on the present and future time, by the following animated reflections upon its inestimable worth :—"Whatever the sons of man may wish or pant after in this world, they may certainly attain by dilligence and perseverance in their several pursuits ; but, alas ! there is one jewel, which must forever elude the research of the most active and industrious. Past life, or time that hath fairly fled from us, may be well compared to a brilliant sparkling in the mine of eternity, whose lustre there, only serves to make the darkness of our own mind visible, for having once despised a diamond of the purest water, which Providence had for a while consigned to our care. We may likewise consider each fleeting day, as a pearl at the bottom of the ocean of time, which no diver can ever again call his own, being, when out of mortal hands, as far removed from their reach, as the years beyond the flood." VIRGIL's opinon of the same invaluable blessing, though less diffusively expressed, is equally exalted in the following beautiful couplet ;—

"Sed fugit interea—fugit irreparabile tempus,
"Singula dum capti circumvectamur amore."

On the first day of a new year the moralist will make a solemn pause ; he will consider himself as placed on an eminence, from which looking down on the path that he has ascended, he will reflect on the various scenes he has passed through ; the difficulties he has encountered in his way and the kindnesses and indulgences of Providencc which have supported and cheered him during his pilgrimage. On the other hand a dark and uncertain road, whose entrance only lies open to his view, is now to be explored. He is about to enter on a state of "untried being."

"Thro' what new scenes and dangers must he pass."

"With anxious eye he surveys the commencement of this new stage of his journey :—But how uncertain and obscure the "prospect" that "lies before him,"—for

"Shadows, clouds and darkness rest upon it."

He in vain may say, "here will I hold." Alas ! the hand of Time pushes him on, and he must rely for safety in his course on the protection of his God, and trust, for skilful guides, to his own caution and experience. If he reflect with due attention on the past ; if he know how to profit by the ills and troubles which have already assailed him ; if he remember the difficulties in which his feet have been entangled, and the evils that have resulted from his own folly, vice or carelessness, he will now avail himself of the knowledge he has purchased at so dear a price, and be enabled to avoid them all in future. His steps will be governed by prudence. Every

portion of ground will be examined and surveyed with solicitude before he will trust it with his weight. He knows that the time when he shall arrive at the end of his tour cannot be hastened and will therefore pursue his steady and undeviating way, viewing with eyes of pity the unthinking mortals who dash by him with dangerous and unavailing velocity—or the rash and giddy, who fly off from the direct but rugged tract, in quest of a pleasanter path, and and are lost forever.—Let us then, at this important and solemn period, determine to follow the wise man's counsel though expressed in homely language—"not to make more haste than good speed," Whoever adopts this resolution, will find at the end of his pilgrimage, he has laid up such a stock of wisdom, that he may confer the benefits of his experience on all who are to come after him; —his grey hairs will be to him a crown of honour, and future generations shall rise up and call him blessed.

TRUMP IT!

A whimsical misapprehension took place at a whist-table---when or where, matters not. Three ladies had sat with great impatience, anxiously awating the arrival of a captain of sharpshooters, to make a fourth at their favourite afternoon's amusement, namely a rubber at whist. It grieves me to think it is possible that the mixing, taking up, and laying down fifty-two pieces of pasteboard, can occasion the smallest alteration in the temper of any human creatnre; but, alas! so it has been proved, and, at this meeting, was again illustrated. The captain played delightfuly well in the eyes of his partner, while his cards were good and he followed suit; but an unlucky mistake caused her, in the plenitude of her anxiety, to exclaim, "Bless me, Sir, why don't you trump it." The captain stared, not understanding her, his head being filled with the recollection of recent military manœuvres, till, roused with a repetition—"I say, Sir, why do you not trump it?" he calmly replied—"Why, madam, if you insist on it, I will do my best," and taking out his bugle-horn, he blew with his full force for near five minutes, to the great discomposure of the nerves of the fair trio.

TAX "DIRECT."

In the Legislature of Maryland, leave has been given to bring in a bill, entitled, "an act to tax *Bachelors* and *Bank-Stock*, for the education of *poor children*, in the several counties of the State."——If this should pass to be a law, the Legislature will undoubtedly receive the hearty thanks of every "Ancient Maiden" in the State.

CHINESE LITERATURE.

Mr. Heger, at Paris, who lately published a description of the Chinese Coins in the French Imperial Cabinet of Medals, is employed in arranging 117,000 Chinese Characters which have been collected at the Imperial Press, snd will afterwards, with the assistance of these characters, publish a Chinese Lexicon.

ON EMPIRICS.

FROM REV. MR. GRAVES'S "INVALID."

As I was convinced that my friend, like many others, injured his health as much by such a variety of improper remedies and "*infallible* nostrums," as by his indolence and self-indulgence, I sent him the following sketch

ON QUACK MEDICINES.

It is an exquisite specimen of Mr. Addison's humour, when he makes Sir Roger de Coverly prevail on the Spectator to *taste* "*the Widow Trueby's Water*," a celebrated quack medicine at that time: who having made most horrible wry faces on the occasion, the old Baronet says, "I knew you would not like it, but it is the best remedy in the world for the stone and gravel." Now, as Mr. Spectator felt no symptoms, nor had any apprehensions of ever being afflicted with that disease, he was certainly in the right not to repeat so nauseous a prescription.

There is no doubt that those medicines, the virtues of which are so pompously displayed by their interested venders, are very efficacious in cases where they are proper; but where they are so, they have either been originally prescribed, or generally adopted, by regular physicians. It is equally true, that men of genius often languish in obscurity for want of some fortunate opportunity of bringing their talents into notice; and who therefore may be allowed to take any honest method for that purpose. A very eminent physician, fifty years ago, and knighted for his skill in his profession, made no scruple to relate a stratagem of this kind, which he himself had adopted for that purpose. Having practised a few years in the city and made little progress, he hit upon the expedient of fixing up a box in Petticoat-lane, or some obscure alley, with the inscription of "*Medicines for the poor, gratis.*"—This soon spread his fame from street to street, from east to west, and in a few years he was *invited* and ventured to settle at the court end of the town, where he enjoyed well-earned affluence, and died in well-deserved esteem.

Nor can it be denied, that in this age there are many a gentleman of acknowledged skill, who make use of similar methods; nor are they to be blamed, but rather applauded, for gratifying the public with a view of their persons in the front of their books, in a *fashionable dress*; as posterity will be curious to be informed of every minute particular relative to men of such eminence; their habits of life, and even the manner of dressing their hair, and the like. Thus much then may be granted.

But when a man has the effrontery to assure us, that his nostrum is an infallible cure for complaints palpably opposite; for consumptions, palsies, gouts, rheumatisms, habitual costiveness, and frequent diarrhœas, and the like; not to mention preservatives against plagues, famine, and *earthquakes* (for I remember, probably, a ludicrous advertisement of that kind), "*incredulus odi*:" he excites the indignation, or rather the mirth of every sensible man.

Yet we daily see people who fall victims to these bold pretensions; induced perhaps to make the experiment by some female acquaintance, who really fancies herself to have been cured by some empirical "Drop," or "Balsam of Life;" when the truth was, if carefully scrutinized, that, after having been for some time in a regular process of proper regimen under the care of some able physian, who would soon have restored her to health, she

applies, through mere impatience, to some impudent quack, who has the whole credit of having performed the cure; as, according to the proverb, "when the hare is run down by one dog, another seizes the prey;" or, as Falstaff boasted of having killed Hostspur, by giving him a wound in the thigh after he was dead.

The old female guide at the Cross Baths tells a story (from her personal knowledge, I think) of a young lady who, from drinking a large draught of cold water when she was very hot, had brought a scorbutic humour into her face, so rough, (and almost black) that she could not appear in public.

After undergoing repeated courses of prescriptions, both of the regular physicians and the quacks, for two years to no purpose, she was sent to that last resort of incurables the *Bath*, in Somersetshire, where she was advised to try the cross-bath; but she was so disgusting, and even frightful a figure, that a young clergyman, who used the same bath, prevailed on the guide to give him notice of what days this miserable object fixed upon, that he might avoid so loathsome a sight. It happened unfortunately, as he then thought, that the guide mistook the day, and they met once more; for the poor young lady, who had been apprized of the gentleman's request, was so shocked at the accident of their meeting, that she fainted away, was carried home, and confined for near a month to her lodgings.

Luckily, however, the shock had given such a *temporary* force to the nervous system, as gradually to throw off the scorbutic roughness; and, like Naaman's, when cured of his leprosy, her flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and discovered a most beautiful set of features, and a fine complexion.

But, to finish the tale, (though not fictitious) in the novel style; on her coming to bathe once more, to complete her cure, the gentleman, not knowing her (now unmasked), politely addressed her, entered into conversation with her, and was charmed with the simplicity of her manners, as much as with her person. In short, he waited on her at her lodgings, and convinced that a mutual sympathy subsisted between them, without the trouble "of soliciting an early day," or deferring, from motives of delicacy and other formalities in the unravelling an artificial plot, what each equally wished to take place, they procured a license, and were married, I believe, by the good-natured D——r at the Abbey-church in Bath.

In this and in many other cases, which daily occur, it is impossible to determine (where such various methods are adopted) to which the cure is to be ascribed.

Of one truth however, we cannot doubt, that such violent remedies (even Dr. James's Powders not excepted) must injure the constitution, and shorten the life of the patient; of which I have known many instances among my acquaintances in the course of a long life.

People are in hopes of obtaining the *end* without using the *means*: and any one that professes to perform this *miracle* (for a miracle it certainly is) cannot fail to attract their attention: and when a man, by *habitual* indulgence, has brought himself into any chronical complaint, he will listen to any impudent pretender, who promises, in the usual style of advertisers, to cure instantaneously all diseases "without loss of time," or "altering your way of life;" so that the patient flatters himself that he may still con-

tinue a sot or an epicure, and yet enjoy that health and vigour which are the privilege of temperance and sobriety.

But I would as soon believe Swift's conjurer, who gave out that he would fire a gun in any man's face without doing him an injury, as take any of those wonderful specifics, which are to produce these effects; but the same *credulity* which collected the whole metroplis into the Haymarket to see a man get into a quart bottle, will induce them to confide in the most absurd, monstrous, or rather ridiculous incredibilities. I cannot, without real compassion, apply the proverb, "*Sipopulus vult decipi, decipiatur.*" When a man, by a long course of habitual voracity, intemperance, and indolence, not to mention occasioual fits of intoxication,* perhaps has intirely vitiated his blood, injured his constitution, and brought on some chronical disease, it is absurd to suppose that a box of pills, or "a bottle of stuff," or any thing but a contrary habit of life, gradually introduced, and steadily persevered in, can accomplish his purpose.

An eminent Swiss physician, who wrote the "*Advice to the People*," pathetically laments the toleration of quacks, mountebanks, and conjurers; who, he does not scruple to assert, destroy a greater number of useful peasants, than war, pestilence, or famine; and calls upon the political fathers of the people to suppress or banish so destructive a race of beings.

* As the French have fabricated, and we adopted, almost a new vocabulary, and "*drunkenness*" is too gross a word, I would substitute "*bibacity*" in its room.

SELECTED POETRY.

NEPENTHE: OR, A PALLIATIVE REMEDY FOR GRIEF.

By Mr. Graves, at the age of 90.

"*Minuentur carmine curæ.*" Ovid.

This life, though deem'd by all so great a blessing,
Grown old, I hardly find it worth possessing.
Tho' I enjoy my share of health, 'tis true;
My sufferings are many, pleasures few.
My wife, alas! is, long since, now no more;
That loss, severely felt! I still deplore:
My sons, a darling each, while yet a child,
Each now in Dissipation's whirl run wild,
And madly keen in Pleasure's giddy chace,
Of either now I rarely see the face.
My daughter, so attentive, good, and kind,
Must not be always thus at home confin'd;
Nor could I bear to see her youth engage
Daily to nurse th' infirmities of age.
My eyes too, now grown weak, almost refuse
Their wonted aid to read my weekly news.
My banker's bankrupt, greatly to my cost,
And many a sterling hundred I have lost.
With patience, tho' I've fortified my breast,
These ills by night intrude and break my rest.
Of all these numerous blessings thus bereft,
Tell me, what consolation have I left?
'Religion,' you, my friend, I know, will say:
True; but one cannot surely always pray:

In meditation I indeed delight ;
But thus intent to ponder day and night
On future joys, our faculties must tire,
And pleasures less refin'd, for change require.
When then this source of real bliss is dry,
Fancy her airy visions must supply.
Euterpe still perhaps may deign to smile,
And many a tedious, lonely hour beguile.
My mind oppress'd with anxious care or grief,
Her sportive flights give transient relief:
'Midst want of sleep, of cash, sons, daughter, wife,
The muse still cheers my gloomy eve of life.

ELEGY.

BY J. E. HARWOOD.

Ah me ! with what ardor I chas'd the delusion,
Where fancy midst scenes of futurity rov'd,
When the falter of language, the blush of confusion,
Betray'd the kind wishes of her whom I lov'd.

At length I possessed the vain fugitive hour
So wish'd for to end my pursuit and my care :
Smiles of favor succeed to the stern frown of power,
She listen'd, disdain'd, and condemn'd to despair.

Farewell the sweet hope that still whispered to-morrow,
To-morrow shall silence these doubtings and fears ;
With the winds thou shalt mingle the breath of thy sorrow,
And lose, in the stream of oblivion, thy tears.

Farewell the sweet interest enhancing our pleasure,
And softening the cares we are destin'd to know ;
Farewell, ye gay revels, ah, dear beyond measure !
Though nought ye have left, but remembrance and woe.

Unheeded the seasons distribute their power,
A stranger to joys, I exist but to mourn !
I feel not the biting of winter's sharp hour,
And vainly the beauties of nature return.

SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS.

Munroe & Francis, of Boston, have issued Proposals for publishing by Subscription, a second edition of the Dramatick Works of William Shakespeare, with Dr. Johnson's Preface and Notes—in 16 numbers or 8 duodecimo volumes—to be printed page for page with their first edition, on fine wove paper, with an entire new type. *Subscriptions received at this office.*

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